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CHAPTER IX

MYTHOLOGY

MYTHOLOGICAL BEINGS

(*A*) TA-GHAR

Founder of ideal village organisation, equivalent to Tagaro and Tangaroa.

WE have already met with the creator-deity Ta-ghar who caused the falling of the *memel* fruit which, splitting on the root of the *tapol* tree, gave rise to the creation of the first man and woman and to the alleged "perfect" organisation of Pete-hul.

The Atchin form of the name is Ta-har, used in the designation of such striking natural formations as the Malekulan promontory called Tsüngon Ta-har, "Ta-har's lip," jutting out into the sea between Atchin and Vao.

This deity is clearly identical with the beneficent sky creator-god Tagaro, who is the supreme deity in Maewo, Oba and North Raga, and whose home is said to have been on Maewo.[1] These names correspond closely with those of the Polynesian god known variously as Tangaroa (in New Zealand), Tangaloa (in Samoa and Tonga), Tanaoa (in the Marquesas), Ta'aroa (in Tahiti) and Kanaloa (in Hawaii), and although his attributes differ considerably in each of these groups it will be seen later that the beliefs regarding him in the Small Islands combine most of the elements thus found scattered throughout these Polynesian islands.[2]

Other forms of the name.

In Hog Harbour, on the west coast of Santo, we find a curtailed form of the same word in the name used for the sky-deity Yetar, and in that of the mountain called Takar, where the dead of that region are said to go.[3] In neighbouring regions, where the sky-god goes by other names, the same name is used in various ways for less noble beings. Thus, in Malo, where there is a conflict of cults represented by a belief in two separate sky-worlds, the supreme deity in one is Tokotaitai, but the other is said to be the dwelling-place of Takaru, who is here regarded as having the status

[1] See Codrington, 3, p. 168. Harrisson tells of another home of Tagaro on Mount Lombenbenon, Oba (2, p. 395). The Small Islanders, however, regard Maewo as his home.

[2] For general summary and discussion of these Polynesian attributes see Williamson, pp. 238-43.

[3] Deacon, 3, pp. 463-5.

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MAP VI

Sketch-map of the Northern New Hebrides and Banks Islands, showing distribution of deities of the Tagaro-Kwat-Ambat cycle (in capitals underlined), and the associated Guardians of the Dead (in italics underlined). (*N.B.*—For TAHGAR read TAGHAR.)

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of "big chief." [1] A little further west, at Tismulun on the south coast of Santo, he disappears altogether, and the deity is called variously Tautai or So'o.[2] At the other extremity of this area, in South Raga, we meet with yet another deity, Barkulkul, but the name of Tagaro still survives in the form of *tegar*, used to designate an evil spirit.[3] The Barkulkul area spreads to North Ambrim (Olal), where the name of the deity is Barkolkol.[4] In the Aulua district on the east coast of Malekula his name is Bokoro.[5]

LIST OF REFERENCES TO MAP VI

Banks Islands.		Codrington, 3, pp. 154 ff.
Maewo.		,, ,, p. 168.
Oba: Walurigi.		,, ,, p. 171.
Lolopwepwe.		Suas, 1912 (and Codrington, 3, p. 170).
Raga: Qatvenua.		Codrington, 3, p. 169.
Pornowol.		Tattevin, 1, 1926, pp. 329, 389 ff.
Ambrim.		Suas, 1911, pp. 906 ff.
Epi.		Capell, 1, p. 65.
Santo: Hog Harbour.		Deacon, 3, pp. 463-4.
Tismulun.		,, ,, p. 488.
Tangoa.		Capell, 1, p. 54. *Moli tanuone* and *supetanuone* are terms applied to "chiefs higher and lower of the spirits."
Malo.		Paterson, p. 27.
Malekula:	Vao, Atchin, Wala	Layard, p. 205.
	Big Nambas.	Harrisson, 1, p. 113.
	Lambumbu.	Deacon, 4, p. 637.
	Lagalag.	,, ,, p. 638.
	Mewun.	,, ,, pp. 628 ff.
	Seniang.	,, ,, pp. 554 ff., 617 ff.
	Aulua.	Leggatt, pp. 701, 707.

The Big Nambas Horo.

Among the Big Nambas, the deity is called Horo.[6] This name raises an interesting point, since it appears to be equivalent either to that of the Society Islands god Oro, or else to the Atchin Ta-har, but without the syllable *ta-*. While fully aware of the numerous suggestions that have been put forward by various authors regarding the provenance of the

[1] Paterson, p. 27. I am indebted for this reference to the Rev. A. Capell (see also Capell, 1). Another account, possibly from a different part of Malo, speaks of Taharo as being regarded in this island as a deity to whom prayers and offerings are secretly made, and sacrifices performed on a stone hidden in the devotee's house (Donau, quoted by Speiser, 3, p. 362).

[2] Deacon, 3, p. 488.

[3] Tattevin, 1, 1926, pp. 389 ff. Though usually evil, these spirits are, however, sometimes good. Tattevin quotes the expression *tegar te tu*, "let the spirit be favourable," adding that some are regarded as tutelary spirits (ibid. p. 392).

[4] Suas, 1911, pp. 906 ff.

[5] Leggatt, pp. 701, 707.

[6] Harrisson, 1, p. 113.

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names and of the beliefs associated with Tangaroa in Polynesia, ranging from Micronesia to South China, it may be worth pointing out that in many parts of the Northern New Hebrides, *ta-* is a personal prefix meaning "man of." Thus, in the language of Atchin, with which I am most familiar, *ta-Ba* means "man of Oba," and *ta-Mbü* "man of Ambrim," or, as the natives put it when speaking pidgin-English, "man Oba" and "man Ambrim."[1] In the same way, the familiar Melanesian word for "ghost," which in Vao is *ta-mat* and in Atchin *ta-mats*, is simply the word *mat* or *mats* meaning "dead" prefixed by the same personal particle *ta-*. So also, in Malo, where *nunu* means "shadow" or "reflexion," *ta-nunu* means "soul."[2] It is of course true that the personal prefix *ta-* does not occur in Polynesia, but if, as is held by more than one authority, including Dr. Haddon, the belief in Tangaroa went to Polynesia *via* Melanesia, it is nevertheless possible that the original name of the god may have been akin to the existing Big Nambas form Horo, and that the prefix *ta-* became attached to it in Melanesia but was unrecognised as such in Polynesia, whither the word Tangaroa proceeded as a single word. In the Banks Islands, where Kwat takes the place of Tagaro, we find a form closely allied to Big Nambas Horo in the name of Kwat's mother, Kwatgoro.[3]

Myths connected with this deity mirror social organisation.

Without wishing to stress this suggestion unduly, let us return to an examination of the problems connected with the belief in this deity in the area dealt with in this book. We have already seen how, in Vao, Ta-ghar created the first man and woman, and is held responsible for the "perfect" organisation of Pete-hul into four Quarters, and how this myth is paralleled by the creation by Takaro of four groups in the village of Logueguea on Oba.[4] It is thus clear that the legends concerning him are closely bound up with the existing organisation of society in areas in which they are told. The more usual number associated with this deity is ten, seen in the ten brothers he is said to have in North Raga,[5] and the ten sons which he is said to have had on Oba.[6] On Atchin, the corresponding deity Ta-har is closely associated with ten brothers who correspond with the division of each village, for ritual purposes, into ten families, and there can be little doubt the number ten associated with Tagaro in North Raga and Oba has a similar connexion with the organisation of society there too.

[1] Thus also, with the vowel-change invariably occurring in the Small Islands before certain combinations of letters, *to-Vao* means "man of Vao," *to-Tsan* (in the Vao language *to-San*) "man of Atchin," *to-Wala* "man of Wala," *to-Rano* "man of Rano," *ti-Era* "man of Raga," etc.

[2] Ivens, 4, p. 45.

[3] Codrington, 3, p. 156.

[4] See p. 163.

[5] Codrington, 3, p. 169.

[6] Ibid. p. 171. According to Suas, 1912, pp. 45-7, he makes ten men of clay. One of these he transforms into a woman by knocking off his genitals; this woman becomes the mother of two sons, representing the two matrilineal moieties.

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Kwat the "chief Tangaro."

In the Banks Islands the place of Tagaro is taken by Kwat, said to have been the oldest of twelve brothers, probably indicating the presence at some former date of a twelve-section system of kinship in these islands.[1] Of these twelve brothers, all but himself are called Tangaro.[2] This is again the same word as Tagaro and Tangaroa,[3] and it would thus appear that the title Kwat probably means what the word *kwat* does in ordinary Mota speech, namely "head," here used in the sense of "chief." The title Kwat would in this case mean "the chief Tangaro." [4]

Kabat and Ambat.

Returning to the west coast of Malekula, Deacon further showed the equivalence of Kwat, both philologically and with regard to their respective attributes, with the Kabat of Mewun and the corresponding Ambat of Seniang,[5] whose names, as Dr. Ivens has pointed out, should properly be written Ka-Bat and A-Mbat.[6] To these may be added the Ha-Mbat of Lambumbu and the Ha-Mbut of Lagalag. It would therefore appear certain that the creator-deities bearing both types of name, Ta-garo (Ta-ngaroa) and Kwat (Ka-Bat, A-Mbat), found over an area stretching from the Banks Islands to South-West Malekula, represent two phases of a single culture complex.[7]

All the evidence points to the fact that this deity is a late-comer both in the Northern New Hebrides and in the Banks Islands. In all these islands the belief in him is accompanied by a rich mythology. Apart from being the creator, and giver of all good things, he is especially connected

[1] See p. 150.

[2] Codrington, 3, p. 156.

[3] The full Polynesian form of the word is found in Mota in the name given to certain stones used to protect property, which are called *tangaroa*, "a name no doubt the same as that of the brothers of Qat" (Codrington, 3, p. 184). These stones are said to be the abode of a *vui* ("spirit," Codrington, 2). The word *tangaroa* is also applied to a certain kind of shark which is "a sort of familiar spirit, or the abode of one" (Codrington, 3, p. 187). The word *tangaro* is used for "a morsel of food or drop of kava . . . thrown or poured for a ghost" (Codrington, 2).

[4] Dr. Ivens has also noted the connexion between Kwat and the word *kwat* meaning "head," but thinks the connexion is with hats and masks rather than with the actual head (Ivens, 2 and 3, pp. 157 ff.).

[5] Deacon, 4, pp. 623, 632. The word Ambat is applied in the first place to a single being, and in the second to five brothers, of whom he was the chief. The Kabat was also one of five brothers. He had two sons, who in turn procreated ten stones, which are regarded as the ancestors of the ten families of the Mewun village of Melpmes, where the Kabat lived.

[6] Ivens, 2. The Seniang word for "head" is *mbat(u)*. Dr. Ivens regards Kwat or Mbat as being a generic name for the people of Perry's "archaic civilization" (Ivens, 3, p. 158). For the interchangeability of the sounds *kw* and *mb* see p. 219, footnote 3.

[7] Tagaro's special place of abode on Maewo was called Hombio (Codrington, 3, p. 168). It may or may not be significant that the home of the Ambat of Seniang was the island of Hombi and that the homes of the dead recorded by Deacon in West and South-West Malekula were Embw (Seniang), Iambi (Lambumbu) and Hambi (Lagalag).

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with tusked pigs and conch-shell trumpets, but above all he is, in his terrestrial aspect, associated with the sea. He is represented constantly as sailing in a canoe, and in almost all, if not in all, areas where he is known, he is represented as having finally sailed away over the horizon to an unknown destination. In his heavenly aspect he is invariably associated with light and, in one way or another, with the sun and moon. There is but little evidence in the northern and eastern districts of this area, in which he is more of a deity than a man,[1] as to what kind of race he or the introducers of his cult may have belonged. With regard to the Ambat in the Seniang district of South-West Malekula, however, who are regarded more as culture-heroes than as deities, they are said to have been white-skinned (so much so that Europeans are now called by this name), and to have had aquiline noses. The chief Kabat in the neighbouring district of Mewun is said to have been buried sitting on a stone seat within a stone chamber covered by a mound of earth and loose stones—in other words, what we in Europe would call a chambered round-barrow—and his body and that of his wife are said to be incorruptible. The alleged "undecayed body," "a sort of mummy of the Kabat" and of his wife, are ritually washed, thereby ensuring the continuance of the human race, at the recurring feast known as the "Making of Man."[2]

With this brief introduction, I will return now to a description of the attributes of Ta-ghar on Vao, prefaced by a brief summary of beliefs concerning the corresponding Atchin deity Ta-har.

Two attributes of Ta-har on Atchin: as deity; as culture-hero.

In Atchin the aspects of Ta-har are two-fold. In the first place he is the moon[3] (which is also a stone), whence, according to a belief held very loosely by some families and quite irreconcilable with other mortuary beliefs, men come and to which they return at death. Closely connected with this is the belief in him as a creator who made the land and all men and gave the peoples of the earth their languages. On the other hand he is a culture-hero arriving in a canoe whence he presents to ten mythical petromorphic brothers, who in turn hand them on to all the people on the island, yams, coconuts, pigs and other necessaries of life. Then he sails away, rewarded, according to one version, with a wife. The

[1] Except in the village of Alo Sepere, in Vanua Lava, where he is said to have been born, and where inhabitants claim him as their ancestor (Codrington, 3, p. 155), and in Maewo, where he is said to have been "a great man of old times, very high in the *sugo*, as men used to be and are no longer now" (ibid. p. 168).

[2] Deacon, 4, pp. 649 ff. See also present volume, pp. 706-7.

[3] This is unusual, and clearly a late belief due, presumably, to patrilineal influence. As we shall see below, this deity elsewhere is primarily the source of light, more usually associated with the sun. The Atchin belief is, however, paralleled by Suss's account, rom Lolopuepue in Oba (1912, p. 33), that Takaro is the crescent moon, and the evil deity Mueragbuto or Sugbue (p. 60) the waning moon.

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islands of Maewo, Oba and Raga are called "the land of Ta-har," and thither the youths of Atchin make pilgrimage for the sake of obtaining a specialised initiation into the mysteries of sex.[1] Detailed accounts of both these aspects will be given, with native texts, in the first of my forthcoming volumes on Atchin.

Owing to the briefness of my stay on Vao I did not make any special enquiries about him or the mythology connected with him on this island. I am therefore unable to state to what extent he is considered on Vao as having ever been a man, except in so far as here also he is said to live on Oba, where he made the first sea-going canoes, and whence the Small Islanders derived the art of making them.

In the aspect of creator, however, he has not unnaturally been a subject of considerable interest to missionaries,[2] and we are fortunate in the fact that Godefroy made a special study of his creative attributes on Vao, and of the natives' attitude towards him.

Godefroy's Account[3]

Godefroy's account is in the form of a dialogue between himself and an intelligent native named Melteg-lil-nale.[4]

Ta-ghar a bodiless beneficent creator; opposed to La-hev-hev, the Guardian Ghost; lives in the moon and makes it shine.

When asked just how his ancestors spoke of Ta-ghar before men of his rank, his informant, after some hesitation, said:

"The old men say that Ta-ghar is like a ghost (*ta-mat*)." [5]

"Has he then no body?"

"He has no body."

"What does he do?"

"It is he who has put everything in its place. He makes the trees to

[1] See Chapter XX.

[2] The words Ta-ghar, Ta-har, and their equivalents in other districts, are used, by Roman Catholics, Presbyterians and Seventh Day Adventists alike, as a synonym for God. The belief universally held by natives of the New Hebrides that the white man was their god (or ancestor) returning to them, is expressed by the inhabitants of North Malekula by calling white men Ta-ghar.

[3] All quotations in this section on Ta-ghar not otherwise marked are taken from Godefroy, I, 1933, pp. 226-31 and 238-40. In the following analysis of his account it has been found necessary, for the sake of clarity, to alter the sequence of certain passages, to give certain explanations, and, in a few cases, to suggest alternative interpretations. The actual quotations, however, are quite literal.

[4] Godefroy spells this name Meltelilnale, showing how the soft Melanesian *gh* at the end of the title *melteg* becomes elided.

[5] Note he is not really a ghost, but only like one in so far as he has no body. See p. 225.

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grow. He gives us our food in the gardens and on the trees. He is good, he never wishes us harm. He's very different from Le-hev-hev." [1]

The interlocutor refuses to be drawn at this point into a discussion about Le-hev-hev, and says, "Let us go on about Ta-ghar. Where does he walk? Where is he?"

Here follows an inconclusive attempt on the part of Godefroy to extract information about a vaguely conceived sky-world, which will be referred to below. Finally, having warded this off, Melteg-lil-nale at last said:

"Ta-ghar lives in the moon. It is he who makes it shine, so that it may illumine the night for our ceremonies, for our walks, our hunting and our fishing, and our sea-voyages."

Asked why he and his ancestors thought that Ta-ghar lived in the moon, he said, "Because we see him there. . . . You too, everyone can see him! When the moon is full, you must surely have seen a black thing in the middle of its disc. Look at it closely, and you will see that it is like a man."

His questioner then told him of the European notion of "the man in the moon," who brings a bundle of faggots with which to warm the moon and make it shine.

"Well," said Melteg-lil-nale, "that same thing that your ancestors call 'the man in the moon,' we say that it is Ta-ghar, and, like you, we say he causes the moon to shine."

"What does he do there?"

Begets human children on the moon, which is called "grandmother."

"He brings it about that it is the moon that gives birth to all men. Every child born on the earth falls from the moon, and sees daylight as soon as it has passed through its mother's womb.[2] In the moon, which we call our grandmother,[3] there are children who have only just begun; after a time they fall to earth and become men."

"Does what you are telling me now apply to white men as well as to the men of Vao?"

[1] Le-hev-hev, ferocious guardian of the life after death, is dealt with in the next section.

[2] Among the Big Nambas it is said that "the world and all things in it, including mankind, were created by the moon . . . but the man who gave this information denied that there was any cult of the moon in this tribe" (Deacon, 4, p. 46). In Matanavat, on the North coast of Malekula (according to Harrisson, 2, p. 41), it is said that "the moon shapes the child in the womb. Each new coming of the new moon is the time for such shaping." In Seniang, "the marks on its surface, 'the man in the moon,' are supposed to be the afterbirth, and at the first full moon after delivery the people will point to it and say to the mother: 'Look, there is the placenta.' The moon is also supposed to form the features of children" (Deacon, 4, p. 235). These beliefs are, however, in quite a different category from the official sun and moon cults in Epi and the Southern New Hebrides.

[3] It is not stated to which grandmother he refers.

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"I do not think so, for what I am telling you the men of Vao said long before the white men came."

In later passages he quotes one of the natives as saying: "We do not know whether he begets white men, since our ancestors, not having seen them, never spoke of them. When we say that he begets all men, we think chiefly of those who inhabit the big islands that we can see: Santo, Oba, Pentecost [Raga], Ambrim, Pama, Epi, and our own big island of Malekula."

"Then so long as the moon shines there will always be men on Vao?"

"Yes, there is no doubt of that."

"Why are you all so uneasy and so melancholy when the moon is dark?" [1]

"That is because we ask ourselves, 'Will the moon come back?' If she did not come back it would mean that she must doubtless have fallen into the pit (behind the horizon there is a deep chasm), and in that case, when we died, there would not be any more Vao men to take our place."

"Is that why you are so joyful when you see her appear again, and that you then cry '*Selo! Selo!*'?"

"Yes, for that means that Ta-ghar is lighting her up again and that the two together will go on giving us children."

"So that is why the little children beckon to her and call her *le-le! le-le!* grandmother?"

"Yes, that is so."

Later, he again quotes a native as having said: "Ta-ghar is the father of light; he lights up the moon which he inhabits."

Godefroy sums up this aspect of Ta-ghar thus: "Seeing the image of Ta-ghar appearing on the moon's disc every time that she is full, they infer that Ta-ghar is there up above, occupied with the everlasting renewal of the race."

Associated belief that Ta-ghar is connected with the sun. Ta-ghar as "source of light."

Closely associated with the belief that Ta-ghar lives in and at the same time lights up the moon is the feeling that, as the source of light, he is also connected with the sun. Thus Godefroy recounts how "more than once, while mixing with them when they were at work, I have heard them speak to this effect: 'Yesterday, the clouds plunged us in darkness, but today Ta-ghar gives us light, Ta-ghar shines. Ta-ghar loves us, for *his* sun makes our food to grow (in our gardens). When Ta-ghar is with us (that is to say, when the sun shines) all the world is in light, and it is good; with Ta-ghar it is light, with Le-hev-hev it is the blackest night.' After two or three days' rain it is not rare to hear them radiantly cry,

[1] I.e. from the last quarter till the day after New Moon.

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'*Ta-ghar me har kele* (Ta-ghar shines again).'" Such phrases led him to "think sometimes that they [the natives] confused him [Ta-ghar] with the sun itself." [1] But, he says, "When I questioned them about this, they invariably replied 'No.'" He adds: "It is therefore permissible to conclude . . . that the conception of Ta-ghar and the conception of light are inseparable one from the other, and even that Ta-ghar is the author of light." This supposition, and the identification of Ta-ghar with light in any form, would appear at first sight to receive support from the statement, also made by Melteg-lil-nale, that the reason why the natives speak of the island of Oba as "the land of Ta-ghar" is that this island "lies in the direction from which the sun rises." This, however, is immediately dispelled by the same man's next statement: "The sun lights up the earth *just as* [my italics] Ta-ghar lights up the moon." This shows quite definitely that Ta-ghar is associated primarily with the moon, and only through analogy with the sun.

Alleged sky-world not primarily connected with Ta-ghar, but with the idea of "height" associated with the Maki.

Godefroy speaks also of the conception of a sky-world called *bakeran*. Wishing to demonstrate the evolution of moral ideas in accordance with Catholic missionary thought, and struck by certain analogies, on the one hand between Ta-ghar and the Christian conception of God, and on the other between Le-hev-hev and Satan, it was but natural that he should hope to extend the analogy by comparing *bakeran* with heaven. It is therefore worth while, in face of a conception equally vague both in Christian and in Malekulan theology, to see what he made of the comparison. His first mention of it occurs almost at the outset of his enquiry about Ta-ghar. Following on Melteg-lil-nale's statement, already quoted, to the effect that Ta-ghar was "very different from Le-hev-hev," he brought the subject back to Ta-ghar, asking:

"Where does he walk? Where is he? In the sky?" [2]

"No, he is not in the sky."

"But you say that he is up above."

"It's true, he's up above."

"Well, up above, that is the sky-world."

"I don't know" [Typical answer of the native who feels himself being forced into a position he does not understand].

[1] Godefroy goes so far as to associate the word *Ta-ghar*, "which they pronounce with a very soft *g*, half-way between *g* and *h*" (i.e. the Melanesian *gh*), and which, as he points out, is in Atchin actually pronounced Ta-har, with the verb *har*, "to light up, or shine," and thereby concludes that the names themselves mean "source of light," or "that which lights."

[2] The French word *ciel* means, of course, in everyday language both "sky" and "heaven," and in an ethnological sense "sky-world." In the following translation I use all three expressions, as the sense demands.

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"What do you mean, you don't know? . . . Where, then, is the sky-world?"

"We do not know."

"All the same, you often talk about your heaven, your *bakeran*?"

"That's true, but we don't know where it is."

"But, look, if Ta-ghar is up above, as you say he is, what place does he live in?"

The reply was, "He lives in the moon," and from there on the dialogue continued as already cited.

For the ethnologist and for the general reader the important point resulting from this dialogue is that, try as he would, the questioner was unable to establish any relationship between Ta-ghar and the sky-world apart from the fact that he inhabits the moon. This he later reaffirms, saying: "though they recognise the specialised occupation of Ta-ghar during a certain period of the lunar cycle, yet they do not know where he lives." In spite of this, however, he returns to his original thesis, or rather hope, by continuing: "strangely enough, they still remember the name *of his kingdom* [my italics], the sky; the *bakeran*, of which they often speak." This subjective lapse on the part of the reverend father is excusable only in so far as it is the only one of its kind to which, in an otherwise admirably objective account, he has succumbed. His next sentence gives us the clue to which system of native thought the conception of a so-called sky-world belongs. "During the interminable Maki rites they perform a dance which takes them to *bakeran*." This dance is possibly one of the labyrinth dances called *na-leng*, to which reference will be made later.[1] The statement makes it quite clear that the conception of *bakeran* is closely connected with the Maki, with which Ta-ghar has nothing whatever to do. The questioner's preoccupation with the conception of heaven, or the sky-world, as a place, and the natives' resistance to this idea, is shown by the statement with which he winds up his enquiry: "When one asks them, 'What is your *bakeran*, where is it?' they reply, 'We don't know; our ancestors did not tell us.' Nevertheless they have the notion that it is up above rather than down below, and that it consists of something beautiful and good." Though this last phrase would appear to smack of Christian dogma, it does, in fact, represent, but only in attenuated form, the native conception, which is not one of any place at all, but simply one of great and glorious height, typified, as we shall see when we come to discuss this rite, with the hawk's soaring upward flight.

The corresponding word *bageran*[2] in Atchin means "cumulus cloud," and was adopted by a native of my acquaintance as a "high" Maki title, in common with numerous similar titles indicating physical, social or moral "height." These will be discussed later when dealing with the

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[1] See pp. 336 ff.

[2] The final syllable of this word may be connected with *ran* meaning "dawn."

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Maki, when it will become evident that the idea of a sky-world as a place is in fact foreign to the native mind, which is occupied not with locality but with the conception of pure height as symbolical of that upward striving which is the essence of one aspect of that rite.[1]

The whole subject of a supposed sky-world has been raised here only as an indication of the danger of false association when possessed by an *idée fixe*, and to demonstrate the fact that Ta-ghar, though closely connected with the moon and secondarily with the sun, has no other connexion whatever with the sky.

As luminary, however, but only as such, Ta-ghar is also vaguely connected with the stars.

Ta-ghar not worshipped.

Godefroy sums up his cosmological attributes with the words: "Ta-ghar begets men by the moon: in that he demonstrates his power; Ta-ghar has ordained the earth, the sea, the stars, the light, the clouds, all for the greatest good of man, and thereby man recognises his goodness." There is no formal ritual connected with him, nor any act of worship. He has no influence over the weather, and is never supplicated.

He finds himself, however, again frustrated in his search for any kind of reciprocal action towards Ta-ghar on the part of men.

"And this Ta-ghar, who is so good to you, who begets you by the moon and who is therefore your father, who provides food for you every day and has ordered all things for you, how do you think of him? Do you love him? Do you honour him?"

"We know him well; but we do nothing for him. He never does us any harm, so we take care to leave him alone."

Godefroy adds:

"Ta-ghar is good . . . but this does not imply that the natives are in any way grateful to him, nor yet demand favours from him; their attitude is to show no interest in him, but to leave him alone."

This is indeed the case. In all the Small Islands I know of no formal ritual or act of worship connected with Ta-ghar. Nor have I met with any signs of gratitude nor of any other kind of emotion towards him other than one of simple acceptance of the fact that he exists. It is necessary here to point out that, though Melteg-lil-nale said that Ta-ghar was like a ghost (*ta-mat*), he very pointedly did not say he was one. The use of the word *ta-mat* was no more than a manner of speech intended to convey to an outsider the fact that, though not indeed a ghost, he was like a ghost in that he had no body. It is an essential part of the attitude towards ghosts (i.e. ancestors) that they are at once venerated and feared, and that their good or evil moods importantly affect the well-being of their descendants. But Ta-ghar is always good, nor does he ever change, nor

[1] See p. 732.

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could he—a thing that never enters the native mind—be affected by supplication or coercion. Thus, though his light (of the moon, or sun) is greeted with joy when it appears, he is in no way responsible for climatic or meteorological vagaries. The natives "affirm that Ta-ghar, with his clouds and winds, has no power to cause rain to fall." [1] For this, or even to make the sun shine, it is necessary to resort to magic, which operates only through the assistance of a continuous line of previous, now dead, practitioners.

Thus Ta-ghar is never appealed to, nor are there any rites connected with him, but he is simply there.

Ta-ghar pleads with Le-hev-hev to let the ghosts of the dead pass into the land of the dead.

The only action, apart from just existing, and of begetting children by the moon, which he is reported ever to take is when, under the specialised name Ta-ghar Lawo, he intercedes with the Guardian Ghost Le-hev-hev in order that this Being may let the ghost of a dead man proceed on his way to the land of the dead; for which favour the new ghost makes him a present of a pig, the ghost of one killed during his mortuary rites. This incident will be described in the next section.[2]

Summary of Characteristics

To sum up, Ta-ghar appears in two aspects:

(*a*) As a mythical hero arriving in a canoe, whence he distributes food-stuffs and pigs, together with instructions how to rear them, and then sails away, betraying distinctly human feelings by accepting the companionship of a woman. The islands of Maewo, Oba and Raga are regarded as his home, and youths from all the Small Islands perform a pilgrimage to one or other of them for the sake of being initiated into the mysteries of sex.

(*b*) As a deity with the following attributes:

(i) Is creator of all men and things.
(ii) Lives in the moon, where his image may be recognised in the dark marks we call "the man in the moon."
(iii) Lights up the moon.
(iv) Begets all human children by the moon, which is called "grandmother," whence, when ready, the children fall into their mothers' wombs, which are the portal through which they come to the light of day.

[1] But see p. 634.

[2] See below, p. 227.

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(v) Secondarily, and by analogy, as luminary, associated with the sun and to a lesser degree with the stars, and, by yet further analogy, with the clouds and winds.
(vi) Through his association with the sun makes trees and plants to grow; but has no control over the weather.
(vii) Is definitely not a ghost (*ta-mat*), though like one in respect of the fact that he has no body.
(viii) Is the object of no cult or supplication, but is accepted as in all ways good.

(*B*) LE-HEV-HEV, THE GUARDIAN GHOST

"*That which draws us to It so that It may devour us.*"

Having failed to discover any marked emotional attitude on the part of the natives towards Ta-ghar, Godefroy asked:

"Who then is it that you do think of?"

And was met with the reply:

"Of that other, of that which wishes to devour us as soon as we are dead."

"And what do you call him?"

"Le-hev-hev."

"Who is Le-hev-hev?"

"Le-hev-hev means: That which draws us to It so that It may devour us." [1]

Le-hev-hev, the sexless Guardian Ghost.

[775] Le-hev-hev is the sexless Guardian Ghost, who bars the way into the land of the dead. As I have stated elsewhere,[2] it is not known on Vao whether this Being is a man or a woman, or indeed something that is neither one nor the other. All that is known about its nature is that it is "irresponsible and in all things defiant." [3] The Vao language does not differentiate between genders, so there is no help from that quarter.

776 196 [7] The first syllable of the name, *Le-*, is the present-day feminine prefix with which every woman's name in all the Small Islands begins. In Atchin the name for the corresponding figure is Le-saw-saw, where it is definitely regarded as a woman, maternal grandmother of the ten petromorphic brothers to whom Ta-har is said to have appeared in a canoe and to whom he introduced food-stuffs and pigs.[4] Owing to the law of sound-change by which Atchin *s* becomes *h* in Vao and *w* is softened to *v*, Le-saw-saw and Le-hev-hev are philologically the same word. The

[1] Godefroy, 1, 1933, pp. 228-9.
[2] See p. 606 for tale of a man who for this reason called himself Le-hev-hev because he had killed his sister's son.
[3] Layard, 4, p. 119.
[4] See future volume on Atchin.

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essential name, shorn of the prefix *Le-*, is thus seen to be *Saw*, seen also in *Te-mes Sav-sap*,[1] the name of the Guardian Ghost recorded by Deacon in Seniang, where, though it is regarded as a woman, the prefix *Le-* is absent. Among the Big Nambas we find an intermediate form *Li-sev-sep*,[2] where the vowel and final consonant are the same as in Vao, but the *s* has not been softened into *h*. All these names are equivalent to that of the *Suqe*, *Sukwe* or *Supwe*,[3] the corresponding male figure in the mythology of the Northern New Hebrides and Banks Islands, of whom it is said in Maewo that "Tagaro came down from heaven, made men and other things, and went back again to heaven. Suqe belonged to the earth; his head was forked, therefore he had two thoughts in it. Whatever Tagaro did or made was right, Suqe was always wrong. . . . Tagaro sent him to a place where is a bottomless chasm, somewhere inland in Araga [Raga], where he rules over the ghosts of the dead." [4]

As will be seen from the sketch-map on p. 206, this Being, further variants of whose name are *Supe*, *Sugbue*, *Supua*, *Le-siv-siv*,[5] etc., has a distribution considerably greater than the area covered by the creator-deities of the Ta-garo–Kwat–Ambat complex, and belongs almost certainly to an older layer of culture.[6]

The Guardian Ghost regarded as male in matrilineal areas but as female in patrilineal areas.

The question of the sex of this Being is of the greatest interest. In the Northern New Hebrides, where the kinship system is matrilineal, the Guardian Ghost *Supwe* is said to be male; in all parts of Malekula and the Small Islands, however, where kinship is overtly patrilineal, this same Being (known by the variants of the same name already cited) is, except in Vao, regarded as female. To this the writer can see no possible explanation other than a psychological one, namely, that in those areas in which conscious attention is directed chiefly towards the female line of descent, the unconscious which gives rise to the myth compensates for this undue emphasis on the female side by envisaging the Guardian Ghost as male; while in those areas in which conscious attention is concentrated

[1] See p. 651.

[2] Deacon, 4, p. 585. *Li-sev-sep* is also the name of the highest rank in the women's secret association called *Langambas* in Lagalag (Deacon, 4, p. 495).

[3] The consonants *q*, *kw* and *pw* all represent the same sound, which is a mixture of *kmbw* or *kmpw*, varying from dialect to dialect, for which the sign *q* has been adopted as a convention by the Melanesian Mission. Sounds having the same origin become in Malekula and the Small Islands *mb*, *b*, *p*, *v* or *w*.

[4] Codrington, 3, p. 169.

[5] In North Raga and Oba this Being is replaced by a special aspect of Ta-garo, namely Tagaro-lawua (Codrington, 3, p. 170), who is found also in Vao under the name of Ta-ghar Lawo with Le-hev-hev in the Cave of the Dead (see p. 227).

[6] The same name is found even further afield in Nguna under the form *Sugbwe* (Capell, 1, p. 71, quoting Milne).

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on the male line, the unconscious compensates by envisaging this figure as female.[1]

Of all the Small Islands, Vao, though at first sight as patrilineal as the rest, is in fact geographically the nearest to the matrilineal area, and in its kinship system gives due weight to both lines of descent. This possibly explains the uncertainty existing there in regard to the sex of the Guardian Ghost, since there neither line of descent is too greatly over-emphasised.

Closely connected with the predominate line of descent is the name of the graded society itself. As already mentioned in the Introduction, this society is closely connected with the Guardian Ghost, and is, in one of its aspects, an actual representation of the journey of the dead. The interesting fact is that in the matrilineal areas this society is called by the same name as the Guardian Ghost; in the Banks Islands it is called *Sukwe*, and in Malo, where it appears to have been very similar to the present Vao Maki, its name is *Sumbe*.[2] In the patrilineal area of Malekula, and in Ambrim, it is, on the other hand, called by variants of the word *Maki* (*Mangki*, *Mangke*, *Mengge*, etc.).[3] This suggests an even closer connexion between the Guardian Ghost and the graded society in the matrilineal area than exists in the predominately patrilineal islands of Malekula and Ambrim.

Title of old men of high rank equivalent to Le-hev-hev and Supwe.

A further fact of first-class importance, both as indication of the close connexion existing between the two graded society-complexes and of the aspirations underlying both, is that the honourable title for old men of high rank used in ordinary parlance is actually a variant of the word used for the Guardian Ghost, namely *na-sup* in Atchin, *na-humbe*[4] in Vao. Thus old men of high rank are *ipso facto* identified with the Guardian Ghost.[5] This fact is of the highest importance in understanding the significance of the

[1] Thus, in classical mythology, among the patrilineal Greeks and Romans, the Guardian of the cave from which access to the land of the dead is had, is female, i.e. the sibyl. (See Knight), whereas in matrilineal Egypt the corresponding figure is male. There are, however, certain exceptions, such as the Tubuan of the Dukduk society in the Gazelle Peninsula, New Britain, who is female, though the system of descent is matrilineal. These figures are all guardians; in all cases the ruler of the dead appears to be male, e.g. Anrum Mbwilei in Seniang (Deacon, 4, p. 556), Mal-kalaut in Vao, Mol in the Tasmaut district of Santo.

A curious feature is that the names of a number of undoubtedly male culture-heroes in the Small Islands as semi-historical figures also have the prefix *Le-*. Whether this also indicates a compensatory psychological process or whether these names have been adopted by men from female mythological figures, as Asaor (see below, p. 606) adopted the name of Le-hev-hev, I am unable to say.

[2] Rivers, 3. For other variants of the word see pp. 274, 691, 693.

[3] See pp. 691-2.

[4] It is this title which Godefroy translates "chief." See note on p. 233. This is not to be confused with the titles attached to names such as *Mal*, *Melteg*, etc. (see pp. 431 ff.).

[5] See p. 258.

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whole graded society-complex. Its ritual and mythological significance will become abundantly clear as we proceed with the examination of these aspects of culture. Psychologically the implication is that if, as we have seen, the Guardian Ghost represents the reverse side of the social structure, so also does it represent the reverse side of the part played by the individual in the Maki. The extraverted bravado and extreme self-assertion associated with this dionysiac performance is thus seen to be balanced by a ferocious self-accusing monster lurking in the performer's unconscious. It is perhaps significant in this context that the natives of Vao, whose Guardian Ghost is sexless, are notably the mildest and most urbane of the Small Islanders.[1]

Le-hev-hev referred to as "It."

Since the Vao language gives us no clue as to the correct way to refer to this sexless Guardian Ghost, and since in English it is necessary to use a differentiated pronoun, the obvious way out of the difficulty, and one which to my mind accords most nearly with the native conception, is to use the pronoun "It" with a capital "I" to indicate personification.

Guardian Ghost as "Spider" in neighbouring islands.

The Vao definition of Le-hev-hev is, as we have seen, "That which draws us to It so that It may devour us." Godefroy, on one occasion, actually refers to It as a "beast." Speiser is still more explicit, referring to it as "a crab-like monster with two immense claws."[2] Before examining the Vao beliefs, it will therefore be worth while to make brief mention of the non-human aspect of the Guardian Ghost in neighbouring islands. This is most strikingly shown in the equation, at Lakona on Santa Maria (Banks Islands), of Supwe with Marawa, the Spider.[3] No explanation is given by Codrington for this at first sight curious identification, but, if we look at it in the light of the Vao definition of Le-hev-hev, it is clear that the spider sitting in its web is also symbolic of "that which draws us to It so that It may devour us." This is clearly the basic reason for the selection of the spider as symbolic of Supwe. There are, however, two interesting extensions of the idea. The first is in a Mota account of how Marawa, the Spider, "spun a line from earth to heaven" in order that a man might carry up his child to join its mother, who had ascended thither in the smoke of a fire.[4] Possibly connected with this story is the

[1] According to Harrisson and to Godefroy, this is no longer the case. The latter refers to the natives of Rano as "quarrelsome," of Wala as "pert," of Vao as "sour-faced," but of Atchin as "having soft and polished manners." Let it be noted, however, that conditions have changed. In the three first a new morality has been adopted. Atchin alone is without a Mission Station.

[2] Speiser, 1, p. 68. For details see below, p. 228, note 1.

[3] Codrington, 3, p. 157.

[4] Ibid., 3, p. 383.

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name of Marawa ("spider") given to one of the early *Tamate* Societies which may be entered by a baby in arms.[1]

The other extension is more interesting, since it provides a connexion between the spider's web and the mortuary labyrinth mythology of Seniang, in South-West Bay. In the mythology of that area the Guardian Ghost sits by a cave on the sea-shore, having drawn beside her on the sand a labyrinth figure which the ghost of the dead man on his way to the Land of the Dead must know how to complete. If he cannot do this, she eats him. The drawing of labyrinth designs, based on the above myth but now largely secular in character, is a common pastime all over the Northern New Hebrides, where they are drawn with the finger in ashes or sand.[2] It is easy to understand how the spider's web spun by the Guardian Ghost in one area should become associated with the labyrinth design drawn by the Guardian Ghost in another. A tale combining both motives comes from South Raga, and relates how one day the deity, there called Barkulkul, when leaving his house, left his wife in it and "shut the door by making, with a liana, a design similar to a spider's web." When he came back, finding the design disturbed, he went to the men's house, where he said to the men, "Let us make drawings." They made drawings in the ashes, similar to spiders' webs, and when Barkulkul saw that his brother Marrelul made the same design as Barkulkul himself had made, he knew that it was he who had entered his house in his absence and seduced his wife. And so he killed him.[3] This story is, of course, a degraded one, but serves to show the widespread symbolism of the spider's web as a labyrinthine structure with a devouring monster in its midst.

Guardian Ghost as "Megapode."

Another interesting piece of symbolism in connexion with the Guardian Ghost is that found in North Raga, where Subwe is also called Malau,[4] which means bush-turkey, or megapode. This remarkable bird has huge claws, with which it digs long tunnels into the ground in which to lay its eggs.[5] The habits of the bird are largely nocturnal, and at night it emits wailing cries. These cries are associated with ghosts, and the tunnelling activity recalls the underground world where the Guardian Ghost lives, which, in the case of Vao, is, as we shall see, a cave. Yet further, the megapode favours volcanic soil on account of the extra warmth it supplies for hatching eggs,[6] and volcanoes are also, as we shall see, connected with

[1] Rivers, 1, vol. I, p. 110. [2] See Chapter XXV. [3] Tattevin, 2, 1929, p. 988.
[4] Rivers, 1, vol. I, p. 189. Compare also Atimis Malau in South-West Bay.
[5] The New Hebridean megapode, *megapodius layardi*, does not build mounds like other members of the species (see p. 752). In Matanavat on the north coast of Malekula, the bird, there called *mola*, is semi-sacred. "If one village gives a scrub-turkey to another, that is a token of permanent peace." Such exchange is there even more sacred than the exchange of hawks (Harrisson, 2, p. 55).
[6] Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 461.

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the life of the dead. Marawa, the Spider, also lived with Qat, at a place "where the volcanic fires still smoulder" near Lakona, on Santa Maria.[1]

Guardian Ghost symbolised by the "Rat."

Another account, from Olal in Ambrim, tells how the Guardian Ghost, here called Bugliam, the god of night and darkness, has as its symbol the rat,[2] because it burrows underground.

Relations between Guardian Ghost and sky-deity become progressively dissociated as kinship systems become more patrilineal.

Before returning to the details of the Vao material, one further aspect of the Guardian Ghost remains to be discussed, namely, its relation to the sky-deity. We have already seen that the name Ta-ghar, allied to the Polynesian Tangaroa, appears to represent a comparatively late cultural drift. This does not necessarily mean, however, that his attributes are exclusively associated with his name. If we examine the mythology connected with neighbouring gods who do not bear this name, such as Tautai in the Tismulun of Santo, and Barkulkul in South Raga, we find, indeed, the interesting fact that, while in their terrestrial aspect (i.e. as men having once walked on earth) they differ greatly, in their spiritual aspect as beneficent creator-gods dwelling in the sky they are remarkably uniform. The two aspects may be classed respectively as cultural and psychological. That is to say, that when, as we shall shortly see in the Vao account, Ta-ghar and Le-hev-hev are said to have nothing whatever to do with one another, this fact may be true from the point of view of the names they bear, that is to say their cultural aspect, but it by no means alters the fact that they are psychologically complementary. One represents the conscious striving, the other the unconscious fears. It is well known that in the case of individuals the greater our state of dissociation the higher are our ideals and the more abysmal our fears. The same is true of cultures. We have already noted the unconscious factor working with regard to the sex of the Guardian Ghost, which is, in the areas under consideration, the reverse of that dominating the conscious social structure. A similar process may be seen at work in the relations between the creator-god and the corresponding Guardian Ghost. This may be briefly illustrated from mythology, from which it will be seen that the relations between the two become more and more strained the further they recede from the matrilineal area in the north, with a comparatively simple graded society, towards the predominately patrilineal area in the

[1] Codrington, 3, p. 157. Compare also the expression *Malau gan Qat*, "megapode the food of Qat," meaning sulphur such as is found in the solfataras in Vanua Lava, and at Lakona (Codrington, 2).

[2] Suas, 1911, pp. 906 ff.

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south, with its tremendously complicated and expensive ritual exhibitionism.

Five areas will suffice to show the progressive state of dissociation. If we take first the Banks Islands, we find that Qat made everything himself, excepting Night, for the making of which he had to invite the aid of the deity called by that name.[1] There is no obvious conflict here at all.

In the western part of Oba, where Tagaro is the deity and does the creating, there is still no true Guardian Ghost, the less reputable aspects of society being represented (as they are also in the case of Qat) by aspects of Tagaro himself under the guise of brothers, chief of whom is Tagaro-lawua, the Big, who "was a boaster and incapable." [2]

In Eastern Oba we find the first obvious trace of dualism in the figure of Suqe. Tagaro made everything right, and Suqe made everything wrong, but still "Suqe shares the work of creation with Tagaro. They two made the land, and the things upon it." [3] There was as yet no definite separation between the two.

There is, however, an interesting Oba tale published by Codrington, according to which Tagaro the Little has a conch-shell trumpet in his hand, and when Mera-mbuto, who is another form of Suqe, asks what it is, he says, "The voice of you and me." Mera-mbuto says, "Wait a bit till I go back to my dwelling-place [which is a cave] . . . then you shall speak with the voice of us two that I may hear it for myself." Tagaro blew and Mera-mbuto's brothers fell everyone from the tree in which they were. Mera-mbuto himself was delighted and jumped high again and again in his cave, and his head struck against the rock and the rock stuck fast into his head, and there he died.[4] In this tale we see Tagaro tricking the Guardian Ghost for aspiring to equal him.

In North Raga the conflict takes on a more serious and definitely religious form. Here it is said of Suqe that "his head was forked, therefore he had two thoughts in it," and Tagaro sends him "to a place where there is a bottomless chasm . . . where he rules over the ghosts of the dead." [5] Still, Suqe, though banished, is not destroyed, and for the last stage of dissociation we have to go a little further south, to South Raga, where the good deity is Barkulkul, and the ghosts of the dead go to a place where is the Guardian Ghost called Marrelul, "killed by Barkulkul for having disobeyed his orders, together with the snake that had been burnt in the men's house." [6]

[1] Codrington, 3, pp. 156-7.
[2] Ibid., 3, p. 170.
[3] Ibid., 3, p. 171. Suas (1912, pp. 45-7) recounts also how the two boys Takaro and Mueragbuto (=Suqe), ancestors of the two matrilineal moieties, came from the same mother, Takaro feeding from her right breast and Mueragbuto from her left.
[4] Ibid. pp. 400-10.
[5] Ibid. p. 169.
[6] Tattevin, 1, 1926, p. 394. For the full story of the burning of the snake see Tattevin, 2, 1929, pp. 991-3. This is a common theme all over this area.

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Le-hev-hev a bodiless spirit, like Ta-ghar; inspires fear. Connexion with Maki. 776

Let us now see how the Guardian Ghost is regarded in Vao.

"Le-hev-hev," as we have seen, means: "That which draws us to It so that It may devour us."

The next question was:

"You say It wants to eat you? How? With Its teeth?"

"No, not with Its teeth; It is like Ta-ghar, It has no body, It is like a ghost (*ta-mat*). It's terrible. . . . We are in great fear of It, and think only of It; whereas we think but rarely of Ta-ghar. There is no connexion between them. Ta-ghar is one thing and Le-hev-hev another.[1]

"It is to save ourselves from Le-hev-hev that we sacrifice our pigs, that we dance, and that we perform all our rites."[2]

This phrase refers not only to the Maki, but also to every sacrificial rite on the Small Islands, even those ostensibly to individual ancestors, since, as we shall see, one of the essential aspects of the Maki is the attainment of one-ness with this figure who is the embodiment of all ancestors, and the propitiating of it so that the sacrificer may obtain entry into the life after death.[3]

Having now indicated the deeply emotional character of the attitude towards Le-hev-hev, I will here give my own record of the dead man's dealings with Le-hev-hev and of his journey to the land where his deceased forefathers carry on their existence after death.

The Journey of the Dead (Author's Account)[4]

Summary of elements common to Vao, Atchin and Wala. 775 171

The author obtained three accounts of the Journey of the Dead of high rank, from the three islands of Vao, Atchin and Wala. All three accounts agree that the dead man first enters a cave, close to the long black-sand beach, in Vao called Ghoramp and in Atchin Orap, situated on the Malekulan mainland between the islands of Atchin and Wala. Having passed through this cave he then proceeds down the coast of Malekula to a promontory called Bong-na-un on the Malekulan mainland facing the

[1] Godefroy adds: "Ta-ghar has his own personal occupations, and Le-hev-hev has his which have nothing to do with Ta-ghar." This is, however, not entirely accurate, as will be seen below (see p. 227).

[2] Ibid., I, 1933, p. 229.

[3] See p. 257.

[4] Here reproduced, with minor alterations, by kind permission of Professor C. G. Seligman and Messrs. Kegan Paul, from *Essays Presented to C. G. Seligman*, London, 1934, pp. 119 ff. For best summaries of comparative material see Rivers, I, vol. II, pp. 261 ff. and Williamson, I, chapters on "The Soul after Death," and comparative tables at end of vol. II.

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(C) BEINGS CALLED HAMBALEV OR AMBALEV

775 (a) *In the caves, guarding the dead.*

776 In the last section were mentioned certain "assistants" employed by Le-hev-hev to keep the dead of "common people" in the caves to which they go after death. These so-called "assistants" are all aspects of a Being whose name as spelt by Godefroy is *Ambalev*, or *Hambalev*, but the name of whose order I recorded on Atchin as *Ghamba Lep*. Of those ghosts that live in caves, those from each of the Small Islands appear to be under the surveillance of a different aspect of this Being. Thus, according to Melteg-lil-nale,

Ghosts from Wala and Rano living in caves on the promontory of Pinalum are guarded by *Ambalev marelemrek*.

Ghosts from Atchin inhabiting the caves of Orap are detained by *Ambalev malavame*.

Ghosts from Vao inhabiting caves towards North Cape are looked after by *Ambalev martembur*.[1]

(b) *Prowling along the path to carry off the living to be eaten by Le-hev-hev.*

On the other hand, he says, "We have never seen either Ta-ghar or Le-hev-hev, but we have often seen this one's assistants." Elsewhere he speaks of "*Hambalev*, Le-hev-hev's assistant, who prowls along the paths: we hardly have time to see him before he is upon us: he makes us die of fright and takes us to his master, who immediately devours us." . . . He is the most terrible of ghosts.

"All the same," remarked Godefroy, "I have never yet heard speak of anyone falling victim to *Hambalev*."

"That's true," replied his tactful informant. "But we know that wherever the reverend Fathers live, *Hambalev* very rarely comes."

(D) GHAMBA LEP

776 These last quotations clearly envisage this Being as attacking not the dead, but the living. This is the character attributed in the Small Islands to a specialised type of flying trickster inhabiting certain villages on the mainland of Malekula between Norsup and the reefy bay south of Uri, whose activities I have described elsewhere.[2]

[1] Godefroy, 1, 1933, p. 234. The names of these *Ambalev* appear to be topographical, since the name of the first, *Ambalev marelemrek*, is probably an amalgamation of the word *mara* meaning "man" and Limwerek, the name of the chief mainland village that the *Buili* are said to inhabit. In the same way *malavame* probably means "man of Lavame," another mainland village of which a few survivors are now on Vao. The third name *martembur* probably means "man of Tembur," indicating some other village I do not know of.

[2] Layard, 3.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
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These tricksters, called *Bwili*, form a kind of brotherhood the name of which is *Ghamba Lep*, clearly the same word as Godefroy's *Hambalev* and probably meaning "Great Fire." Their sphere of influence does not reach to the Small Islands, but is confined to the mainland of Malekula, where they are much feared. Having gone through an initiation rite in which their bodies are said to be cut up and joined together again, they are said to acquire the power of flight in the form of fowls, and of transforming themselves into snakes and other objects for the sake of working harm on their victims, one of their main tricks being to assume the form of a husband or wife and seducing the unsuspecting spouse, thereby causing the victim's death.[1]

[1] For one tale told on Vao, see p. 81.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
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Church through the doctrine of apostolic succession and the laying on of hands, with the slight difference that the hands are not directly laid on but that the essential element of touch is achieved through the medium of the kava root, universally recognised in the Pacific as a channel for divine (ancestral) inspiration.

Tolamp Maki about to be revived.

The position of Tolamp also affords evidence of the importance of the whole Maki rite as a promoter of well-being and social prestige. It so happened that my chief informant on Vao was a Tolamp man who had at one time, when on another island, become nominally a Christian, and had at the same time amassed a certain amount of wealth in pigs. He had, however, renounced the first without renouncing the second, and had returned home to rehabilitate the fortunes of his clan, and his method of setting about this was, with immense energy, to clear a space for a new dancing-ground for the performance, for the first time on Vao, of a Maki in which the participants should be exclusively Tolamp men.[1]

MAKI INTRODUCED FROM MAINLAND VILLAGE OF N'AV-AV

The Story of To-wewe

The following story, told of the origin of the Maki on Vao,[2] makes no mention of a dolmen, but only of a stone-platform. This may be due either to a mistake on the part of my informant, or to the fact that he, a Tolamp man, was envisaging in his account the type of Maki that he himself was at that moment about to perform, a type more like the Atchin than the Vao Maki, in which a stone-platform is erected for both parts. However this may be, the important point to note is that the story refers to the introduction of this type of monument, which is that which, to the native, typifies the Maki as opposed to all older forms of the graded society rite.

The founder is said to have been a man named To-wewe, who lived at the village of N'av-av on the mainland of Malekula.[3] The type of

[1] For a brief history of this, and of the dispute to which his action gave rise, see pp. 435 ff.

[2] A strange lapse by an otherwise reliable author (or possibly his editor) is the extraordinary statement attributed to Godefroy (1, 1933, p. 40) that Maltaru, who, in his genealogy (see p. 94), he assumes to have been born in about 1770, "knew neither the White Man, nor iron, *nor the Maki*" [my italics], and that his son Meltéklerang (born about 1800) was the first to witness all three. This is, of course, manifestly untrue of the Maki as a whole, and the statement, if made to him at all, must have referred only to the introduction of some of the very latest new forms of the rite from Atchin.

[3] I have not been able to place this village on the map. It is said to have been close to the recently extinct village of Na-tsing-ware, some three miles inland from Tsungon Ta-har, and some four miles distant from Vao.

2: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1936
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wooden image and the monolith itself was carved to represent the ancestral human form, the wooden image having been added only when the art of carving stone was lost, so that what was originally a stone statue became split into two parts, of which the portrait, being of wood, in time disappears, and the plain monolith only remains. Though in Atchin the ritual has become so elaborate as to have largely obscured its original significance, there can be no doubt that in its earlier forms, as still in South-West Bay, the monolith actually represented, and was deemed to be inhabited by, the ghosts of all those ancestors who had previously performed the rite, and, after death, the new sacrificer himself. Hence its importance as a memorial and in the preservation of genealogies and history. Many of the more important figures in Atchin history are thus commemorated, both by their stones and by the preservation of their graves. So strong is the association of ancestors with stones that in semi-mythical accounts they are frequently stated to have had the power to turn themselves into stone during life-time, or to have actually become stone when they died. This process has been carried yet further in the case of those figures associated with the mythology connected with the journey of the dead, who are now to be seen as natural coral blocks standing at various points on the coast along the path trodden by the ghosts of the dead on their way to their future home.

There is no space to do more than mention a few of the most important in the long list of ritual activities in this rich civilization: activities in connection with the belief in ancestors and rites of communion with them; the protracted mortuary ritual; initiation lasting nine months with an intensive period of thirty days in which continuous hoaxes are practised on the luckless novices; the operation of incision; rites connected with the consecration of the long-distance canoes capable of carrying thirty men on trading expeditions to other islands for as far as 80 miles over open sea; a special form of sex initiation performed on the distant island of Omba; the consecration of houses and of tusked boars; magic; their economic life, their fishing, gardening, and trading; their laws of copyright whereby nothing is given, but everything, such as songs, dances, variations in ritual, whole rites, magical formulae, designs for the carving of ancestor-images and of canoe figure-heads, details of house construction and decoration, and a hundred other aspects of their artistically rich culture, is sold by these intensely commercial people at high prices and with due ceremony from individual to individual, village to village, and island to island, thus constituting the framework for the dissemination and blending of endless variations of culture; history and tradition.

One other feature must be mentioned on account of its bearing on the coming of the whites. Mr. Harrisson has already referred to the white-skinned, aquiline-nosed immigrants, who are said to have introduced the latest phases of megalithic culture into that area. On Atchin the equivalent culture-hero is a being called Ta-har, corresponding to the Polynesian Tanggaloa, Banks Islands Tagaro, and the Big Nambas Horo, regarded in Atchin as the benign creator, who is at once a stone and the moon, who made the islands and gave their inhabitants their languages, who arrived in a canoe and introduced the pig and the coconut to ten legendary petromorphic brothers standing on

2: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1936
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the shore, and whose name, in spite of his sexual activities which they may not have known about, the missionaries subsequently adopted as a fitting translation for the word God.

(*b*) *Conditions in Atchin in* 1914

In considering the reaction of the people of Atchin to the coming of the white man it will be of use to bear one principle in mind. Anthropological research shows that culture contact, if it be not too uneven by reason of the too great predominance of one party over the other, is one of the prime causes of vitality and progress; that too great stability, on the other hand, almost always leads to decay. Although the nature of the contact between the whites and natives was one of overbearing disparity, and so was not conducive to progress, the situation was remarkably mitigated in Atchin by the existence of culture movements within the native system itself prior to the white man's advent. In the three islands of Vao, Atchin, and Wala, the phenomena both of progress and of decay were thus already at work. Among the many movements of culture occurring in Malekula within comparatively recent times, there arose some eight generations ago a new centre of diffusion at a spot on the Malekulan mainland opposite Wala. The new form of culture spread first to Wala, which, on the subsequent extinction of the mainland villages, became its classic home. Vao still remained the stronghold of the earlier form of culture previously common to all three islands. Atchin was a half-way house between the two, incessantly acquiring new rites from Wala and passing them on, through the slow methods of ceremonial purchase, to Vao. Both Wala, the classic home, and Vao, which at that time was only beginning to adopt the new rites and beliefs, were at the time of my visit comparatively stagnant, and the people of Atchin, being, through the constant changes that were taking place, looser in mind, were at the same time in all ways more progressive. This chance of history has, to my mind, been of no little importance in conditioning the type of reaction on the part of all three islands to the disturbing fact of the arrival of the whites, whom the Atchin people have withstood with much greater success than either of the other islands, and by whom they were consequently both more feared and more respected.

Mr. Harrisson has been good enough to say that a further contributing factor was the timely visit of the anthropologist at a moment of great stress in the history of Atchin, two months after a serious conflict with the government, which, under normal circumstances, might well have led to a punitive expedition. Whether this is the case I am not in a position to judge. It may however be worth stating that I was, so far as I know, at that time the only white man in the group (with the possible exception of Catholic missionaries) who was unarmed and who expressed appreciation for their culture. It would however in my opinion be untrue to say that this attitude of admiration did more than encourage them in a standpoint they had already taken up—a determination that at all hazards they must maintain their own cultural integrity, even to the point of settling their own disputes if possible without warfare in face of common danger.

One of the white man's great complaints against the natives has always been